

Comments Received from Individuals - Volume III

- 1) End the promotions from within the USPS. The current system perpetuates the status quo. Marvin Runyon had the right idea about structuring USPS as a business by eliminating layers of management and staff. Focus more on customers and the employees. Recognized the importance of people in the organization--items that William Henderson or Jack Potter were never willing to do. Bring Federal Express' style of management into place.
- 2) Close small post offices, whose areas could be served more economically by letter carriers.
- 3) Take a more critical review of those on the workman's comp or disability retirement roles. If the person is able to work, bring them back to the USPS or on a contract basis, instead of them receiving money for staying at home doing nothing.
- 4) Allow employees the option of continuing collective bargaining.
- 5) Maintain 6 day delivery service. It allows customers who work Monday thru Friday access to postal services.
- 6) USPS to focus on its core mission-universal mail service. Get out of sponsorships.
- 7) Contract out all rural routes that serve areas of sparsely populated "country settings"(rural carriers refer to these areas with less than 12 customers per mile of service). Merge the rural routes that serve areas of densely populated "suburban and urban"(rural carriers refer to areas with more than 12 customers per mile of service) with city carriers to form a uniform type of mail delivery service.
- 8) Set up an independent board to oversee the USPS operations. Empower them to actively and timely respond to customers and employees complaints, and act accordingly to provide better customer service thru a motivated workforce and end the hostile work environments.

I was struck by an idea earlier today, that I think most Americans would agree with. A quick search on Google led me to PCUSPS site and after a quick review, I though perhaps my idea was not so novel, and it was already being worked on by our government.

After a quick glance through the site, I however could not find my idea listed as a topic currently under revue. Much mention was made of universal service, and the ability to continue universal service as email stole volume and revenue from the postal service. What seems lacking to me is the concept that "Universal Postal Service" in today's world means Email - not simply standard postal delivery.

There are two reasons that Universal Email is important. The first is to prevent the haves and the have-nots from separating further. The second is to protect the citizenry from Email fraud and abuse.

Currently, most internet scams are in some fashion propagated by email. Spam is also a universal concern.

If the postal services powers were expanded to include building and maintaining a National Email system, the current laws regarding mail fraud could be expanded to cover email abuses of said system and Postal Service Inspectors could pursue the perpetrators. Tracking email abuse is not difficult given the appropriate resources, but prosecuting it is almost impossible today. I am a computer network engineer and have been involved with several email abuse situations. In all cases there was a clear perpetrator and victim, but no way to find justice. A centralized agency with enforcement powers would quickly be able to bring this situation under control - and the mere fact that there was a centralized agency would deter many cases of abuse from occurring.

I posted a more informal email to a newsgroup earlier today - that sparked a round of discussion. Please read it below. I think a system developed as outlined below would be easily embraced by the American populous, and could perhaps also end the financial crunch the Post Office foresees in the future.

To whom it may concern,

I have noticed that most US postal service tractor trailers are not equipped with the large air dam on the roof of the cab. Without this air dam the vehicle is using an excessive amount of fuel because the trailer portion of the truck is a flat surface and is not aerodynamic. The United States is not a position to be wasting valuable resources. In addition, postal rates have steadily increased and part of the reason has been fuel prices. I believe that all US Postal service tractor trailers should be equipped with the appropriate air dam on the roof of the vehicle to be more efficient and use less fuel. Statistics show that this feature can improve mileage by 2-3 mpg. This is very significant when you consider that these vehicles only get 6-8 mpg. This increase across the entire fleet of postal Tractor Tractor trailers is very significant.

This commission has its work cut out for them. I am a 27 year career employee of the USPS with a varied background. I have been a postmaster for the past 10 years at several locations. My current assignment includes customer service and delivery in rural and city. I have experience in plant operations and labor relations also.

I believe that in addition to those areas that the commission is looking at, there are other challenges for the USPS that don't get as much attention. Yes, we need congressional law change. And the biggest challenge is matching work load with operational hours and expenses. A critical issue that gets very little attention is the stronghold that the unions have in our operations. We have very little flexibility that a private industry would have. There are many things that need to be done that we can't do because of the unions. The contracts keep us from operating in the most efficient manner.

Another issue that doesn't seem to be addressed is the vast structure of administration. I would like to see the administrative expenditure compared to the actual cost of customer service, delivery and processing. We the postmasters and the operational managers are under heavy fire from all areas of administration. It seems that every department can place requirements on us, and they believe that we always have time to do them. That is not so. Operational functions are way overmanaged. This keeps the administrative jobs sacred.

The most important area of concern is that the USPS is losing revenue which equates to mail volume. However, the delivery system keeps growing at a rapid rate. There is no business that can survive when their work load keeps growing, and the revenue declines.

If the postal service is to survive, it would seem that we must cut down the expense of the administrative structure, reduce the processing functions to match the mail load, and cut delivery expenses where they are losing a large portion of money such as the very small offices that could be served with rural route or contract route delivery. The large number of CSRS employees still on board has a great effect on the system also.

Please listen carefully from those that have been in operations for many years, and can see the challenges from the operational and customer perspective.

Dear Sir/Madam:

This is a first for me writing a letter such as this to an individual in your position. My point is simple, I agree with making the Post Office a business that is privately owned. Although I know many employed in management as well as non-management positions within the US Post Office, from what I've gathered in conversations over the years it needs a complete overhaul across all lines. You pay rural delivery people more than teacher's make, you pay people who sleep on the job at night, and you have brand new post office locations that are within 10 minutes of another office. I could go on and on based on conversations from maintenance workers, to rural delivery people, to mail handlers and front line clerks.

Rural delivery is the first area I would tackle. Expensive to have and you lose a great deal of money doing it – fact. I have rural delivery by the way to my home. You could easily, and I mean easily, find qualified individuals to deliver rural mail at \$7.00 to \$8.00 an hour or more but do not compensate for gas miles for example. Get out of the rural delivery area and contract it out – SAVE MONEY. I know a rural delivery person, delivering for over 30 years, who is at work at 7 a.m. and done with his work on a “daily” basis by noon and home by 12:15 the latest 12:30 p.m. To top it all off he gets compensated for his vehicle for mileage beside his salary which is rather nice. To this day he still notes what he gets paid for the hours he works and what's required of his position. I live in New York in the snow belt by the way. This is just to give you an example, a true example of what goes on daily, better yet yearly in the US Post Office. A highly inefficient and non-cost effective business. There are other rural delivery people besides the man I've noted that the same stands true for them as well, men and women. I've often said that I would love to have his no brainer job, by the way the “no brainer” reference is how he describes his job, he's hopeful for the early-out package that has been in the “wind” this year.

On the flipside, I've seen window clerks first hand who need more help and have none and are running around like chickens with their heads chopped off. Lines out the doors in many instances, where's the customer service???? The US Post office needs to be overhauled everywhere in every job function and I don't see it happening, as it needs to happen, while being a business under the hands of the Federal Government.

Since I'm working to pay their salaries via my federal tax I should have a say in what I feel needs to be revamped, overhauled, and completely fixed – the US Postal Service.

With 33 years of experience, owning and operating my own Direct Mail Company, I believe that I have some feel for the operation of the United States Post Office. While I, and many of my peers, are perplexed by the fact that no small business owners were included on your commission roster, this electronic means of input may provide the opportunity to have some outside thoughts expressed by those of us on the front line of postal utilization.

By any measurement, the USPS is large. That is a given. With that comes great complexities in terms of organizational focus and willingness to operate within the framework of their fundamental mandate. As "outsiders" you have the opportunity to provide such focus, eliminate bias and operate within a planning mode that will allow logic to prevail. With that in mind, please accept this input from a naive citizen (though with vast experience in the field) who depends on this huge organization for his livelihood and that of his employees.

If an organization has a federal mandate that is dissimilar from any other and it enjoys laws that prevent any competition from utilizing its infrastructure (initially subsidized by tax payer dollars), right down to and including the end point of the process - a customer's mailbox, then it would seem logical to ascribe the term "monopoly" to that organization. It would seem paramount that your commission set this debate to rest as one of your first actions in recommending a business model.

Now, if an organization is a monopoly and it uses that position to forge a penetration of other "non-protected profitable markets" should that approach be allowed? While studying the business model currently espoused by the USPS, I would call for you to examine the myriad of such efforts, costing large sums of money, in which the USPS tried and failed in these new markets. That money came from somewhere. In short, it has been vacuumed from the other mandated areas and contributes to the economic strain that continues to haunt the USPS.

Even now, there continues a stream of costly expenditures to enter the "e-market" business. When harking back to the federal mandate of delivering mail to all addresses (the fundamental focus of USPS) I think it is a spin on the mandate to allow a monopoly to go in this e-direction. I would call on your commission to look closely at a number of these "venture capital black holes" that are currently in vogue:

- 1) eBillPay - Receive and pay bills online.
- 2) NetPost - CardStore and other mailing online.
- 3) DineroSeguro - wire service of money to Mexico.
- 4) Postal Store - handling over-the-counter and web site sales of everything from piggy banks to Super Bowl Matted Art and Pro-cycling Gear.

The last item brings up a constant irritant. Why is the USPS sponsoring a cycle team and where does it fit the mandate? Indeed, where does the constant TV advertising, and mailings informing the public of one item or another offered by the USPS as though they were not a monopoly, fit into the economic model needed in response to their requirement to curtail costs?

If the threat of **losses** in mail volume to email is a relevant matter of great concern then why is the **added** number of pieces in mail volume voiced as a great concern as well? One is up and one is down and they are both matters treated as threats? How can that be?

If side ventures of a dubious nature are put to rest and the advertising is cut to zero, I believe you could begin to see some improvements at the bottom line.

The top two expense items in their budget, is now and ever will be, labor and transportation. As in any business, if you want to begin making an impact on economic problems it is wise to look at the truly significant factors. A strong stance would seem to be demanded in dealing with unions

that have driven the "cost/performance" ratio out of whack. Entry positions should be treated as such on the wage scale and the cost of training should be recovered by a reduced hourly rate during the early years of employment. Flexibility and accountability are terms that need to be explained in detail (not just concept) and then enforced. There would appear to be a significant amount of fat in the labor arena when viewed by the stated reductions anticipated (and often confirmed) by automation and work-sharing.

The USPS would seem to offer the perfect test platform for the government's move to reduce air pollution. A drive to replace all USPS vehicles to the new hybrid driven delivery trucks would pay huge dividends in both cost of operation and reductions in pollutants. It would have the side benefit of proving the cost-effective nature of these 50-60 mile-to-the-gallon engines and potentially begin to build a public acceptance (and reduced cost of manufacturing) that would further the government's objectives.

Meanwhile, consider the elimination of every day delivery to certain remote locations. In Alaska this is a way of life. Where people rely on airplanes to deliver mail once a week there does not seem to be a huge public out-cry. While the decision to review these opportunities is a macro declaration, easy to say, the implementation is a micro program that will take input from those at the delivery point in management roles. It is worth the effort to investigate this potential for savings.

Continue to review all opportunities of work-sharing with independent contractors and those in businesses that relate directly with the USPS. This has led to a considerable reduction in work force (more if unions allowed) and when some portion of the savings are passed on to those involved in work-sharing as an incentive, it works!

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I am a 20 year Letter Carrier in the postal service. I have been a 204B (supervisor-in-training). I am a shop steward that is definitely pro-business, and wrote a letter opposing a resolution proposed by our local Branch to take an official position Against a war in Iraq. Since the PO is incapable of fixing itself, and the union lacks the clout to force the issue, please consider the following proposals:

- Retain collective bargaining with production employees (the people that actually do the labor), eg; Letter Carriers, Clerks, and Mailhandlers.
- Eliminate Saturday delivery. The savings in resources would be incredible.
- Examine the redundancy of salaried employees (they vastly outnumber all wage earning employees), and eliminate unproductive non-labor positions. It is a widely held maxim in the Postal Service that if you get a job "downtown", you are set for your career.
- Create a management training system along the lines of the United States Army's Non-commissioned Officer Education System (NCOES). Right now, anyone with any kind of an undergraduate degree can become a supervisor, without having an understanding of good customer service, interpersonal relationship skills, or counseling skills towards those they are supervising. At least in the military one has to have reached a certain rank (skill level) before even qualifying for NCOES.
- Create a different way of measuring mail volume. Floor supervisors spend an average of three hours a day in each post office just "counting the mail". That is a LOT of salary spent. Would weighing the mail at each station in the huge delivery containers it comes in be alot faster than using a yardstick to measure "footage" as is currently done? Just weigh it "wet" and "dry" and determine how much weight has been delivered. This idea will eliminate 1,000s of supervisory positions.
- Create a healthier work climate. In the Portland, Oregon district alone, as of this past month, over 75 grievances have been filed against management over continued

violations of the contract. Most of these are settled locally and in favor of the Letter Carrier position simply because of poor resource management and people skills. Much more \$\$\$ has been wasted by poor management decisions to routinely violate the contract than any "time wasting" practices of Letter Carriers. How much possible time can a carrier waste on an eight hour route if it takes eight hours to do the route?

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As a Mail Processor working, the work has been very hard on my body. I am not alone, everyday I hear my co-workers complain of their aches and pains. The pay is good and most of the workers there will tell you that this is the reason that they stay. Although there are workers with college degrees and some former professionals working here, most of the workers are like myself only high school graduates. We do not have the bodies and muscles designed to do this type of work. I don't know if anybody does. We come to these positions, some as former Armed Forces Veterans, with worn out bodies that cannot withstand the long hours, sometimes 12 hours a day on our feet and repetitive motions required by the positions. To the casual observer taking a tour of the building and its operations it may seem like our jobs are a 'piece of cake' and it is true that they do not require much intelligence. Throwing mail onto a conveyor belt, bending, lifting and pushing are not difficult tasks to perform. However, when you add in throwing 20 pound trays of mail up over your head every few minutes for 8 and 10 hours a day, year after year your life expectancy is greatly reduced. The repetitive tasks are hard on even younger people's bodies and there are many injuries. When someone is injured on the job the harassment by supervisors and management begins. The work environment then becomes **hostile**. Somehow, I'm not quite sure how, management's bonus' and promotions are effected by 'on the job injuries' and 'production numbers'. When repetitive motion tasks are compounded by the need to be quick in order to meet the daily mail dispatch times....injuries happen. This is the! main problem that exists at most USPS facilities. Supervisors and Managers are pressured by their superiors to meet goals with fewer and fewer employees. (They want those bonus'!) The workers are **forced** to work longer hours while in pain and the harassment and anger are passed on to them by managers, sometimes resulting in the creation of psychotics who "go postal". These managers and supervisors are uneducated, unskilled (mostly males) with no people skills. They will tell us at stand-up meetings phrases such as; "It rolls down hill!" I have read some of the bios on the Commission members and realize that you are all very qualified in the Management area of large companies and am sure that you know how to talk to and motivate workers. People with your quality of education and expertise are non-existent in the Postal Service that I know. I am hoping that you will *'get down with the workers/people that do the job! every day'* and discuss at length as well as observe the problems that they experience. We are periodically given an employee questionnaire to fill out and I am hoping that you will not only look at the results of these individual polls, which I don't think are to the point at all, but urge you to consider the 'worst case scenarios' of management-labor relations that exist.

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I am a postal employee, a city carrier. I have some ideas about saving money for the postal service. I know this doesn't fall under the heading of reconstructing the postal service, but every little bit might help.

Have you ever really taken a look at the postal uniforms? Do the carriers really need to wear only the approved, found in the catalog clothes? For the amount of money that is spent on the clothing allowances why not let the carriers wear their own blue or navy pants? The quality of workmanship on the approved pants is pitiful, but we don't have a choice in what we can wear. A simple pair of jeans would last quite a bit longer than the paper thin, non-breathing material that our uniform pants are made of. Why not cut the uniform allowance in half and let us provide our own pants? That would be a considerable savings. And maybe women would look like they were wearing women's pants instead of men's pants. And maybe different climates of the country could wear clothing suitable to their climate instead of one size, texture, weight, design, etc. fits all.

While we are at it why not let us wear shoes that are comfortable and truly fit so as to avoid foot fatigue and injury instead on only "black" government approved footwear? They are a lot of comfortable shoes out there that just happen to be white.

My next major suggestion would be to rotate postmasters or "pivot" as the USPS likes to call it. Why couldn't the postmasters from some of the AO offices pivot to a couple of offices during the week and we could eliminate a postmaster's position, and SAVE MORE MONEY?

Since City Carriers are expected to deliver the mail daily according to the management computer and make or break the financial statement for the company perhaps we too can contribute our input into this process.

I am a customer service supervisor with the US Postal Service (USPS). I have been with the USPS for 5 1/2 years and have been a supervisor for three years of this time. Prior to this career tenure, I serviced in the USAF for 30 years.

One of the major problems with the USPS is the lack of holding managers accountable for the decisions that they make. Most knowingly violation contractual agreements with the unions, which in turn cost the USPS an enormously sum of money. Most have been unfortunately promoted to positions in which they are not qualified for, nor have the education or experience to perform successful. Also, customer service -- that is providing good service to our citizens, seems secondary. The trend is to make the number look good as far as productivity and profit. Frankly, I am ashamed of the service we currently provide to our citizens because it is substandard. The trend is to do what is necessary to cut hours, even if its means to leave mail in the post offices that should be delivered that day.

I truly feel that the USPS should focus on delivering first and second class mail and stay away from other unsuccessful financial adventures, such as priority mail (a complete failure and rip-off), parcel delivery, e-commerces, etc. Parcel delivery should definitely be a competitive adventure amongst the other mail competitors, such as UPS and FedEx.

I wanted to give you my view of the challenges we face at the PO. This is my personal opinion and does not represent a statement on behalf of my union.

I hear rumors that some feel our unions are the problem. Please promise me you will take a look at the grievances (at least at arbitration level) that the union(s) file. The money wasted fighting for our basic human dignity alone is outrageous. Management could so easily avoid most of our Labor problems by simply learning Labor Relations skills.

I am not alone when I say I feel like an animal in a cage, beaten by a cruel master to get some work out of me. How difficult would it be to be patted on the back (figuratively) and told, "Job well done.". Instead we are browbeaten and micromanaged in strange and unusual ways. Would a reasonable person ask a pregnant woman to bring medical documentation for why she had to use the restroom 'too many' times during her shift? What is 'too many'? That is just one example. I have a million of them. Our management is our biggest challenge, not only at the Labor level.

Do you know what their budgets are spent on? I recently saw a 'restricted' article describing a home loan program for those rascals.

It boasted that one home was purchased for \$850,000. Contrast that with management's inability to purchase safe equipment for the workroom floor because it's not in the budget. We see their offices on the 'other' side with wonderful furnishings and the latest computer systems. On our side, (mail processing), computer equipment either isn't available or it is the obsolete equipment that management is tired of, choosing the new equipment for themselves.

In the real world where a manager is fiscally responsible, he/she would realize that the work done that actually generates revenue would come first. In the antiquated Postal world, Management follows a dysfunctional model. It is the old 'me first', modeled on a governmental agency spending someone else's money with no responsibility to show a profit.

Please give our management a thorough scrubbing. It is the 'infection' that their patches haven't even touched. We need a big strong dose of 'antibiotic' in the Management Zone. To this point, the Postal Commissions of the past have left it to Management to fix themselves. They are incapable of doing it. Real World Labor Relations leaders would give us a real boost. Send out the dysfunctional and bring us Managers who really know how to run a business for profit.

We are there through it all, 24/7, 365 days a year bringing you your mail. We do a fine job and serve with pride, hindered only by a group of people (Management) unfit for the challenges that face us.

Dear sir:

I am a USPS employee. I do not understand why the USPS continues to maintain post offices in small communities that in essence represent less than an average rural route- all at a cost that greatly exceeds the cost if they were a rural route. I am not talking about post offices that are in remote areas, these post offices are just as close to another larger post office as most urban area post offices are for the general population, yet were are spending in excess of \$100,000 a year to keep these small offices open.

I feel the only way that the postal service will save large amounts of money is to go to no saturday delivery no one cares that ups and fedex and airborne don't delivery on saturdays. Most people are not home or the bank s and other places are closed by the time we get our mail anyway. Just think how much money it would save. and our stamps would not keep going up to have 6 day mail delivery.

Invariably, when a corporation in the private sector experiences a diminution of profits, it immediately reduces its numbers. The USPS has undergone every possible form of business loss from revenue to profit, from article categories to mail volume for years and to this date has not effected a significant and meaningful reduction in force.

This Presidential Commission has one overriding concern, one that will make or break the United States Postal Service as a viable business enterprise, and that is to vastly decrease the number of employees in its ranks. The only step of any magnitude available to this commission

for recommendation is the elimination of Saturday delivery with the corresponding elimination of letter carriers. Delivery should be held to 5 days. Level 6 technician positions should be terminated. Early outs should be offered to the Letter Carrier craft. Numbers must be reduced!

This one major step will set a strong foundation and carry a lean and viable US Postal Service into the future.

First I want to state some of the major complaints both internally and externally. Carriers are getting more and more frustrated because they're starting later and later, and being required to return to the office before darkness falls. Customers complain that they don't get their mail at the same time every day. Business customers complain because they don't get their mail early enough in the day. The Plants complain that not enough mail is available at the critical entry time, which, in our area is 1800. Clerks are under a great deal of pressure to get the mail to the carriers (80% before their start time). New employees get overwhelmed on their first day of performing the job, specifically city and rural carriers. They're required to set up a route that they don't know and to stay within 8 hours. We lose a lot of employees due to this stress.

Now, for her idea. On a non-widely observed holiday, schedule in enough people to set up every route in every office so that it's ready to be pulled down. Once the routes are set up, everyone goes home. Next morning, start the carriers at 0700, let them pull down the routes and head into the field to begin delivery. Once delivery is complete, they return to the office and set the routes up for the next morning, and the process repeats.

Here are the benefits:

I-Delivery

- a. Carriers will be able to start early, removing the resentment they now have with later start times.
- b. Supervisors will be able to complete their required reporting, perform street supervision, and be able to control overtime, since the carriers will be IN the office instead of spread out all over a delivery area. Supervisors will also be able to have more hands on time with carriers who may require additional training or direction without the distraction of having to complete required reporting.
- c. Mail collected on the routes will be ready for dispatch by 1300-1400, depending on route field times. As long as customers are aware that the earlier they mail, the sooner the mail gets processed, this should ensure that all but the last collections will be at the Plants long before CET.
- d. Routes will be delivered EVERY day at very close to the same time, regardless of whether it's a sub on or a regular. Businesses will have their mail earlier in the day, even those at the end of a route.

II-Distribution

a. Clerks' starting times can be moved to a later start time, since there wouldn't be the need to get mail to the carriers in the morning, which would save a great deal of money in work hours without having to reduce retail counter hours.

b. Clerks would be able to sort ALL of the mail to the routes so that 100% is at the carriers' cases prior to their return from the field.

III- Mail Processing

a. The lion's share of collected mail would be available to be dispatched to the Plants by 1300-1400, which opens the processing window by several hours. With the mail at the Plant for earlier processing, it can go out the door earlier than it does now and allow a larger window of opportunity for transportation with the airlines.

b. With earlier arrival of mail to the Plants, there would be more opportunities for "day" jobs, giving employees something to look forward to as their seniority increases. This would also allow for better use of our automation equipment.

As I stated, this is merely a synopsis. I hope that you will take the time to review what I've written here and to think outside of the box. I have made many attempts to "sell" this idea to not only District Managers, but our AVP as well, and have not been successful. The only retort that I have heard is that our EXFC scores would be affected. I believe that once this process is up and running that the earlier receipt of mail to the Plants will offset any potential delays, and that our delivery standards can still be met or exceeded.

I am a letter carrier I have an question why can't the plants at postal facilities have a cut off time like banks, if you make a deposit after 2:00pm it is the next days deposit. I think the same could work with the mail. the carriers would have all of the mail they were to deliver by 9:00 am and get on the street, this would put the carriers back in the office early, then the carriers could work up the mail that had been processed while they were on the street , the next morning the carriers would come in and case the first class and priority into the mail they had worked up the previous afternoon and get on the street again. This would keep the carriers off the street in the evening improving safety and all of the mail would be processed and delivered each day.

It does not seem fair for only the postal service to have the right to process 1st class mail. It does not seem fair that the mail box attached to a persons home or installed on the curb line can only be used by the postal service. These items were purchased by the homeowner and they should determine who can use it. Why does the postal service have a law where they can pay an employee for working 2 Sundays in a week? Presently an employee that is scheduled on sat. night where part of the schedule includes Sunday is given full Sunday differential and then when this employee works on Sunday is given another Sunday differential. Only in the postal service can a person be paid a differential for working more than one Sunday in a week. The salaries of the employees are exorbitant for the work that is actually performed. A person coming off the street with a days training can fill MOST positions in the postal service. Presently the postal service is run by the unions and that is the way that management wants it. Every time the union gets a raise for its employees management also gets a raise. How many employees claim on-the-job injuries? How many of these claims are controverted? Are people who claim that they cannot work ever checked on? Its amazing how many people with back injuries can go out and bowl. There is no check done. Management rarely does anything to a claim but rubber-stamp it and the employee has a free vacation. When the postal service decides their fiscal picture each quarter is

everything calculated into it? That I would like to know above everything else. Presently first class mail has dropped due to electronic mailings. Why is it necessary to have 6 day delivery? Its because the NALC wants it not because its needed. As an average person I would be satisfied with 2 or 3 day delivery. Also I wish there was some way to stop stuffing my mailbox with all this junk mail. My relatives, neighbors and friends all feel the same way, keep the junk out of my mailbox. This junk mail is important to the mailcarrier as it gives them something to deliver. The best way to improve the postal service would be to privatize it. This will never be done because the unions simply wont allow it. I am afraid that this commission will make recommendations that either will have little effect on the postal service or that these recommendations will probably be ignored. Surely you must understand that one political party is in favor of whatever the postal service does. After all they are guaranteed 800 thousand votes plus spouse plus children of voting age. The postal service employees and their families can swing an election. I truly believe that it is so political that NOTHING can be done to change it.

The question is, "Why is it necessary to issue another stamp each time there is an increase in postage?" The above proposal suggests that this is an unnecessary cost. It seems that by doing two simply things you can eliminate the cost of printing the additional stamps that must be added to the old stamp. First, create a period of 30 days of which the old stamps will still be honored and second create a "rubber stamp" that can be used within the post office facility that allows one to pay the difference allowing the postal employee to simply stamp over the older stamp indicating the proper postage has been paid. This would create more revenue by getting people to use the old stamp before the deadline and also do away with the need to issue the make up stamp. I'm certain you will find an increase in stamp sales and users who are gratified by these changes.

I have been reading Politics of Postal Transformation book and think it provides an excellent review of 4 business models:

1. The mercantile model: The Netherlands and Germany
2. The market model: Finland, Sweden and New Zealand
3. The national model: Denmark, France and Canada
4. The hybrid model: The UK and Australia

I hope you find Campbell's work useful in your study of the alternate business models currently functioning in other parts of the world.

President's Commission on the USPS:

I offer the comments below in hopes that drastic changes can be made to the Postal Service so it can continue to provide universal service. The Postal Service does many things well. We travel every street in the country, 6 days a week. When the PMG stated we must concentrate on our core business he was right on target. On the other hand, should we continue to deliver services that the private sector can do as well and for less money? Express Mail? Parcel delivery? Years ago, Postal Executive, Ed Horgan, suggested that with the best delivery system in the world we should partner with our

competitors and deliver “the last mile” for them for a fee. This was 1988 and we still are going down the same roadways with the brown trucks every day. Maybe we should not be in the overnight business at all. Profits from that segment cannot be used to subsidize FCM so why are we continuing? These are the issues that I hope your commission will look at closely.

Talking about “transformation” doesn’t get the job done. Yes, there are many good things happening but it will probably be too late to save the USPS. We suffer from some of the worst management selections that can be found anywhere.

First the concept of “hiring from within” makes no sense at all. Why not invite current employees to compete with an outside hiring process. And then, promote or hire the best qualified. We promote people into accounting who have little or no background. Meanwhile, there are finance and accounting majors that are coming out of college each year looking for work. The same is true for marketing, facilities, purchasing, labor, legal, transportation networking, retail sales, public relations, and yes, postal management. Having a postal background helps but a good manager can manage any operation. By promoting people into jobs that they are not fully qualified for only creates a long learning curve in the best case. Unfortunately, in the worse case, we have an employee who cannot learn the job, forever. Changes at the top don’t really impact the operations at the lowest levels and that is where we are losing to our competitors.

As a Postmaster I talked to a customer this week who got her Christmas presents for her daughter returned from SC as NSS (no such street). When I called that office, I found that they, that branch, did not have that street since the area had created 4 new branches in the past 12 months and the street in question was now delivered by a new branch. Instead of sending it on to the other branch, in the same city, they returned the package to the sender. Do you think she will mail with us next year? Probably not and worse, management would never know why.

I thought we had learned that the “management by intimidation” method had not worked in the past and were changing? Calling for PM accountability, sign off sheets for service/safety talks, cutting hours for the sake of cutting hours do not move us in the right direction. Hire good managers and let them manage. When you micro manage from the top you get your sign off sheets timely but do you get better service to our customers which translates into more confidence, thus more revenue?

We put people in jobs that require basic computer skills and offer little or no training. On the craft side, we promote the most senior part time clerk to full time window clerk whether they are good with customers or not; they are promoted due to their seniority. We should have our best people meeting the public.

We are sinking and we need basic changes in many areas but hiring and personnel practices have to be addressed as well. If we don’t we will have all of the legislation that we say will cure our ills in place and still fail due to poor management.

I am an Electronics Technician for the United States Postal Service. I recently watched the commission proceedings on CSPAN. My comment is with regard to "New Products" that will make the Postal Service more profitable in the future. Our company (the Postal Service) is one of the only companies in the United States that provides a logistic advantage unrealized by most any business. We have store fronts in every large city in America and number of small towns in America unrealized by any other company. It is our advantage.

It has always been my contention that we as a communications business ignore that advantage. In an era of communications boom, we have not tapped the potential of using that advantage. Why are we not exploring the area of harnessing email rather than fighting its effects on us? I have a suggestion.

We could be the worlds largest Internet Service Provider by using our logistic advantage. We could use our buildings to house access points to the internet to every household in America, especially those not currently serviced by large metropolitan access points. We could, if this is too much competition for a government agency to embark on, form an alliance with Time Warner or some other communications company to provide email access for EVERY household in America via a local Dial-Up or DSL (where available).

Another product that we should be looking at to make us viable in the future is email machines. Why are we not exploring the use of this type of equipment, provided by, maintained by and marketed by the United States Postal Service.

Here is our opportunity to gain a foothold in the current mainstream of the Communications Industry and an opportunity to legitimately charge the "access fee" discussed by the commission on the show I watched. I feel that in order for us to remain viable into the future, email should be our focus. Rather than trying to find alternative means to bypass the email problem, we should become a part of and a competitor in this business.

I am writing in hopes that you will be able to review the postal service objectively and from a viewpoint from employees and the public. I would hope you would talk to both sectors and get an honest opinion from them instead of relying on the USPS only for information. It would be nice to have a survey done with both that does not skew the results towards what the USPS wants the results to be.

Employees are working longer hours, harder, and late into the evening. There are so many problems with this, let alone the one where a carrier was killed delivering after dark, in Kansas City. That was the ultimate problem with the "New And Better System".

Please look at all factors and decide where things need to be changed, even if they need to be returned to the old methods.

In your review of the USPS and its associated costs, one of the first issues I feel should be addressed is the below cost rates given to the large bulk mailers. While its intent was to expand bulk mail while giving companies the opportunity to modernize and upgrade technology, it's a failing agenda.

The Postal Service looks to increase productivity from its employees, but it is a system top heavy with management. This adds an overwhelming amount of cost to an already too taxed system. Having numerous supervisors and managers sitting idle inside a post office while the majority of its employees are on the streets seems like a waste of money.

The Postal Service needs to eventually transform from a business of transporting letters and papers to a business of package delivery. As E-mail becomes more prevalent, this will be inevitable. However, the intent of universal service at one cost shouldn't be ignored. It appears that the Post Office has lost the vision and intent of our forefathers.

I ask that you not destroy a good, working system to appease private industry.

I want to speak out on the Postal Service, I would like very much for someone to explain why things like this happen. The problem has is and always be Mismanagement. I would gladly testify before your panel and tell you the root cause of postal problems. It starts with the Letter Carrier, examine how managers at the top level pile work that has no impact on mail delivery it just generates numbers so they can say "I am doing my job" , Buy vehicles (Windstar Vans) that are useless for delivery and then force carriers to work in unsafe conditions to justify the expense. They accept mail at a discount that requires the carrier to spend twice the normal time to deliver it. They spend Millions of dollars to settle lawsuits for management abuses. Then they reward that same manager with a higher level position.

I invite you to read the article below and visit a union meeting in any location with 15 or more carriers and ask them the question what is wrong. You will get one clear answer. Eliminate one half of management and notify the other half you are looking for their replacements if things do not change. Would mean an over night reversal of how they do business. I could go on and on But I trust my fellow Americans will be weighing in with comments as well.

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is a classic example of a government agency run by the lowest bidder supplier. The lowest bidder supplier does not always bring the quality to a business that is needed as important as the USPS is.

What is done right by the USPS:

- Employees – overall the USPS hires good employees, but it needs to do a better job setting performance based standards to remove employees that do not deliver quality or quantity of work needed by this organization.
- Equipment – overall the USPS purchases good equipment for the transportation and processing of the mail, but it needs to do a better job setting performance standards for this equipment to deliver the mail faster and with better quality.

- Postal Boxes – overall the USPS has provided a good service with postal boxes, but it has done a terrible job in ensuring mail gets delivered to the correct box. Consolidating mail boxes from individual resident boxes to cluster or block or zone postal boxes would decrease the amount of stops a postal delivery person would make, but quality of delivery would be very important. Special provisions for disabled or elderly residents would need to be made if this change is made in residential delivery. There have been some securities issues around people stealing mail from mail boxes, but there is no perfect system.

What is done wrong by the USPS:

- Stamps – overall the USPS produces too many stamps. Those who collect stamps will not like this, but a lot of money and time is wasted in producing new stamps. Maybe this function needs to be separate from the rest of the USPS business so collectors can still participate in this business without affecting the costly changes this brings to the USPS. A good example of this is the U.S. Mint. They are making a large profit from coin collectors.
- 9 Digit Zip Code – overall the USPS failed in implementing this as a cost saving plan for mail delivery from the early 1980s. If the majority of mail comes from businesses, then setup a separate mail pricing structure for mail from businesses. The business price structure will have to take in consideration how far the mail is being delivered; such as zoning charges that is done by private companies. The residential price structure still needs to be a one price charge for letters based on weight, but zoning charges could be done on oversized mail and packages. The residential pricing needs to be changed, but this will only work when overweight mail is returned and discounting is given to mail hand written verses printed verses 9 digit zip coded mail; yet it is essential to keep this pricing structure simple for the average resident.

As a former business man and now part time employee of the U.S.P.S., I would like to relate a few ideas to the commission. I do not claim to be an expert in the business of the Post Office, but as an employee it is very easy to see where some improvements can be made. I have worked as both mail room sorting clerk and carrier.

1. Standardize all envelope sizes accepted by the Post Office. Limit envelope size and configuration to a limited number to optimize automated letter sorting. The vast differences in the size of envelopes make automated sorting very difficult. Envelopes that are rejected by automated sorting must be sorted by hand.

2. Standardize flats and newspapers for same reasons as # 1.

3. Standardize mailbox design and location. Certain mailbox designs inhibit speedy mail delivery.

Examples are; a. Mail slots- too hard to open.

b. Old fashioned, wall mounted mail box- they are too small to accept average size envelopes, and certainly too small to accept flats. Mail must be folded or rolled up as small as

possible to insert mail.

Location of mail boxes on private property must be standardized. Locations vary from curbside to people's backyard. As a carrier, I have found that walking through private property consumes most of my delivery time. To save time and money, mailboxes should be located as close to the street as possible. Mailboxes located at curbside or along sidewalks, would save millions of dollars in labor costs.

Businesses are also a bottleneck in mail delivery. Many do not have a mailbox and require a carrier to enter the business to deliver the mail. Many office buildings are the same way and require delivery to each office. Office buildings should have a central mail delivery location.

These are only a few ideas, but I wager that if enacted, would save billions of dollars in labor costs. As an ex-businessman, I have noticed it was always harder to solve labor cost cutting, without going into the trenches. As a member of the trench, maybe these ideas will help the commission look into some areas that you might find need changing. Thank you and good luck.

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This email is for view of both co-chairmen of the Presidents Commission on the US Postal Service.

I just watched C-SPAN coverage of the first meeting of the Commission where I witnessed testimony by, et alia, the PostMaster General and his Chief Financial Officer.

I learned a lot. I learned, through the Commissions hearing, about the complexities of the current "Universal Service" aspect of the USPS and that this constitutes approximately 55 % of the revenue generated for the USPS.

And it is this particular aspect of the USPS that I'd like to forward a recommendation pertaining to.

First, given the dynamic and quite rapid growth of the internet, especially the "email" aspect of electronic communications, it is obvious to me (both from and individual who uses email vice 1st class postage to communicate with friends and families, and, from one who uses the internet for other purposes that are in direct competition with USPS services), it is obvious to me that some attention might be warranted to legislating some sort of "subsidy fee" or "postal franchise fee" for each individual who has an "American-based" email address.

To clarify my recommendation, I believe those who use email;

1. Can afford the monthly charge(s) for their email accounts, be it via AOL, MSN, Broadband or whatever,
2. Do, in fact, use email in the place of 1st class USPS services and,
3. Are having a significant impact of lowering the volume of 1st class USPS services.

My recommendation is, therefore, that legislation be considered whereby providers of email services (such as AOL, MSN, Earthlink, and broadband, etc.) collect a "surcharge" if you will that will be paid to the USPS. This surcharge (or whatever you want to call it) is a reasonable "public policy" issue to explore. A monthly charge in the range of , perhaps, \$.25 - \$.50 per email account seems, to me, to be quite reasonable.

To make such a legislative action palatable to the ISP (Internet Service Providers, hence, email providers) I would recommend that a percentage of any such "surcharge" be retained by the ISP to defray the cost of collecting such surcharge(s) and forwarding them to the USPS.

I know there has been heated debate in previous months regarding such "fees" for internet service. But, given the prognosis of the USPS in light of the ever-increasing "electronic mediums"

being developed, it is only a short matter of time when the USPS - and it's main source of revenue (i.e., 1st class postage) will virtually disappear from sight.

It is my hope that this email gets to the attention of the entire membership of the President's Commission and that they find it to have some merit.

* * * * *

Report to the President's Commission on the United States Postal Service

A letter Carrier's Perspective of Delivery Methods and Work Load Evaluations

In this report, I attempt to address one basic problem, decreasing volume vs. increasing deliveries, from a nuts and bolts perspective of our delivery methods and letter carrier route and work load evaluations. I am a City Letter Carrier and am only dealing here with City Delivery Methods, and Workload Evaluations.

The Problem:

The Postal Service business and delivery model is based on the concept of increasing mail volume. We can see that, over the past few years the Service has profited when volume increased, and lost money when it decreased. In the meantime there has been a steady increase in the number of deliveries. This increase in deliveries has caused an increase in workload even when the volume, and revenue, has dropped.

We need delivery methods, and work load evaluations for carriers that create an environment in which there is a direct relationship between the volume and the workload, even with the number of deliveries on the rise.

The Solution:

Please keep in mind that I am dealing with the ground level side of the Postal Service, and will leave the organizational and higher level stuff to guys like those of you on the commission.

I see two changes that can solve much of the volume versus workload enigma.

One concerns a change in delivery methods for much of the carrier work force. The other is a change in the way we evaluate the carrier workload.

Change in Delivery Methods

The Problems with current Delivery Methods:

1. Current Delivery Methods create no direct relation between volume and workload.

The use of park and loop delivery methods (your familiar mailman with the pouch, walking from house to house) was developed in the late 1800's and is still utilized today in many areas. Even though many evolutions of this method of delivery have increased efficiency, we have come to a point where we are unable to move the mail any faster using it than we were ten years ago.

Park and Loop, door to door delivery requires deep sorting through automation for the carrier to take the machined letters directly to the street without further office sorting. In other words, the mail must be in exact delivery order, address by address, for the carrier to avoid further sorting. This means that the automation equipment must be used for complete sorting on this type of delivery whether the volume is heavy or light for the deliveries involved. The machine bins involved are dependent on the number of deliveries, rather than the volume of mail for the route.

The same basic problems with machine use are inherent in curbside delivery. The mail must be in exact order to be carried to the street. Though curbside delivery is more efficient than park and loop, it still squanders machine resources.

2. Current Delivery Methods are inherently insecure.

Most mailboxes that are delivered by park and loop methods are open, unlocked boxes, on porches, many of them out of sight from the street. Mail to be collected is usually attached to the outside of these boxes by a clothespin or clip. There is no security to this method. An identity thief can simply beat the mailman to the box to pick up outgoing bill payments, or follow the mailman to pick up delivered credit cards, etc. The customer and the mailman, are not even aware of the theft until it is too late to take precautionary measures.

Curbside delivery is even less secure in that the thief simply may retrieve the mail from the box from a car, and doesn't even have to trespass onto someone's property. In fact, the customer signals the thief that there is outgoing mail by putting the flag up to signal the mailman. These boxes have been particularly attractive to pipe bombers and carriers can tell stories of cats, snakes, trash, and other inappropriate matter placed in these boxes.

Change in Delivery Methods

Proposed Solution to Delivery Methods Problems:

1. Creating a direct relationship between Volume and Work Load:

I propose that Park and Loop, and Curbside delivery methods be changed to centralized delivery methods. This can be accomplished through the use of Cluster Box Units (documentation enclosed). These are locked neighborhood boxes, set in plain view near the sidewalk, that require dismount from the vehicle to deliver.

With the use of CBUs, the carrier no longer is chained to the number of deliveries as the basic unit of workload. The time spent delivering cluster boxes is directly related to the volume of mail.

The machine resources can be targeted for deep sorting to the heavier volume areas of a route. The machines need not sort the mail sequentially for the carrier to take the machined mail directly to the street. In lower volume areas, the machines only need to sort the mail to the CBU and the carrier can accomplish the final sort at the box. In this type of delivery situation the Postal Service can track the amount of mail going to specific CBUs and concentrate machine resources on the higher volumes.

2. Creating Security of the mails.

CBUs are lock boxes, and visible, and by their nature are more secure than either park and loop, or curbside delivery methods.

Each CBU has a collection slot for outgoing mail. The identity thief has no way of knowing whether or not there is mail to be collected or mail already delivered. The narrow aperture of this slot makes it difficult for the pipe bomber or vandal to place unwarranted materials into it.

It is immediately known if a CBU has been compromised, as damage must be done to the box. With this method of delivery, the customer can be notified if there is a need to protect against identity theft. In the other two methods I speak of here, the customer usually has no knowledge of the theft until it's too late to take measures for protection.

Change in Delivery Methods

Other Advantages to Centralized Delivery Methods:

1. Safety and Health:

Many of the hazards of mail delivery are due to the current delivery methods. Park and Loop carriers are constantly obstructed by the environment of the neighborhood, such as toys in yards, holes, landscaping, dogs, and steps onto porches. There is also a health risk in the high volume areas in that the heavy pouches eventually cause back and feet problems.

On curbside delivery, the repetitive motions of bringing all the mail across one's body and extending the arm to the box for each and every stop has at least some risk of carpal tunnel or other repetitive motion problems. There is also the danger of box-to-box moving of the vehicle. With hundreds of moves per day, curbside delivery becomes a matter of great caution for most carriers. CBU delivery has many fewer moves of the vehicle, and it can be set with parking brake, curbed wheels, etc., safely, at each stop.

The carrier can take many deliveries from the vehicle to the box, and doesn't have to cross his/her body with any of the mail.

2. More Efficiency and Security Issues – Parcel Delivery:

CBUs have built in parcel lockers. With park and loop or curbside delivery methods, the carrier must approach the house, knock, wait for an answer, then, if there is no one home, either leave the parcel (if it has such instructions on the mail label) or fill out and leave a notice. With the CBUs, the carrier can leave the parcel in the parcel locker that is built into the CBU, and leave the key for the parcel locker in the customer's box. This makes for much faster, and much more secure delivery of parcels.

3. Efficiency in Office Sorting of the mail:

In Park and Loop, and Curbside delivery, the carrier's sorting case must have separate pigeonholes for each delivery (or at least one for every two deliveries) for the carrier to sort it properly for delivery. With centralized delivery several addresses are in one separation on the carrier's case. This makes for easier sorting as the separations are larger and there are not nearly as many of them. The final sorting takes place on the street at the CBU.

Change in Delivery Methods

How do we change the Delivery Methods?

1. A Change in Postal Regulations:

The Postal Operations Manual will need changes in order for the Postal Service to modernize its delivery methods. Many of our present methods were placed into effect fifty to a hundred years ago and are just no longer practical or secure.

The Postal Operations Manual Sect. 631.6 states, in part, ".... Customer signatures must be obtained prior to any conversion. In single-family housing areas (including manufactured housing and mobile homes) where the residences and lots are owned, each owner must agree to the conversion in writing. Owners who do not agree must be allowed to retain their current mode of delivery." And "....

When a residence is sold, the mode of delivery cannot be arbitrarily changed prior to the new resident moving in. The existing mode of delivery must be retained. "

I would propose a transitional period, in which the Postal Service would be empowered to make a one time change to delivery methods (centralized delivery) with a ninety day notice to customers.

2. A Concentrated Volume Program:

The Postal Service would need to determine which areas have the most concentration of mail volume, and concentrate the machine resources there. The move to centralized delivery would be most effective for machine use where there is little volume, as the machines would not need to deep sort the mail.

3. Selling the program and new methods to the public:

Getting the public to accept these changes will be the most difficult task of all. Carriers have proved resilient and versatile throughout the changes to automation, and the Postal Service is constantly attempting to make the changes needed to survive. The public, however, is likely to see these changes as yet another heavy-handed government invasion of their lifestyle if the matter is not approached in the correct manner.

I propose that these changes be instituted quickly, with the present state of national security as a major selling point. Some public relations and media work concerning the recent problems with identity theft through the present mailboxes, and the pipe bombings, etc. that have endangered both carriers and customers, would do much to ease us into a more modern system of delivery.

Change in Workload Evaluation

The Problems with current Evaluation Methods:

1. Current Evaluation Methods create no direct relation between volume and workload.

The current system of route count and evaluation is a complex methodology, under constant disagreement between labor and management, and is based on the demonstrated ability of the carrier. There is only one standard, in the sorting of mail in the office, and it is not always adhered to.

There is no relationship between the volume of mail processed and delivered and the size of the route. It is all based on what that carrier is timed at on that route.

2. Current Evaluation Methods are inherently unfair.

When territory is moved in the present route structure, the values of the territory are based on the carrier who checked them. This means a carrier will always be burdened with someone else's values if any changes are made to his/her route.

Most route adjustments are based on factors that average the deliveries across the entire route, giving a common value for each delivery. This is inherently unfair, in that different deliveries require different amounts of time within the same route. As an example; a route, which has an apartment complex and several large businesses on it, is adjusted. The deliveries values are averaged to a common value of .5 minutes each, but the businesses deliveries are moved to another route. The businesses averaged 10 minutes each. This type of error is difficult to deal with as the adjusters are just looking at numbers on paper.

The carrier, who works efficiently and shows a decrease in delivery time on his/her route, is added to, and the carrier who shows an increase in delivery time, is subtracted from. This is pure death to incentive to develop efficient delivery.

3. Current Evaluation Methods are inherently inefficient.

Changes in volume, along with automation, and changes of the individual carriers on a specific route result in constant counting and adjusting of carrier routes. If a route uses a specified amount of time for a specific period, then the carrier can request and get another count. Management is always trying to find ways to make these routes

more efficient and carriers are constantly trying to get them adjusted to eight hours. There is a never-ending parade of counts and adjustments, using thousands of dollars and much of our managerial resources (it takes several managers to count and adjust a unit). The job is never done.

Change in Workload Evaluation

Proposed Solutions to Problems with Evaluation Methods:

1. Create a direct relation between volume and workload.

I propose a total overhaul, and a new direction in evaluation of workloads. By setting standards and criteria for specific methods of delivery (this many paces, this many boxes, curbside, park and loop, central, with this kind of terrain, etc. equals this much time), with the main variable in the formula being saturation of mail (volume), we can move to a direct relation between volume and workload. If this transition were to be made hand in hand with a move to centralized delivery, a much easier evaluation of the actual workload would be available.

2. Create a fair Evaluation Method.

By changing our evaluation method from demonstrated ability to standards and criteria, we would have a system where a carrier would be paid for work done, not for time spent. Since all carriers would be paid for work done under a specific standard, they would not be burdened by others' demonstrated abilities in the adjustment process.

I propose that we evaluate workload by placing a specific value on each sector segment of delivery (a sector segment is a small number of like deliveries which actually relate to an automation sort plan). In other words, this sector segment, with this volume of mail, is worth this much. The values would remain the same unless there was a change in the physical properties of the deliveries (buildings torn down, or built, etc.) or a large variation in the mail volume (which can be tracked).

With this type of adjustments there would be no incentive to slow down to get a smaller route.

3. Create Efficient Evaluation Methods.

I propose that routes and the sector segments that comprise them be evaluated by a team of manager and union official, through the use of the specified standards for evaluation. A system of recourse should be

made available to the carriers, as there are sure to be mistakes made, as in any system of evaluation.

By careful consideration in setting the standards, a method may be obtained by which the segments would be counted only once, without the continuing round of resource eating counts and adjustments we have now.

Again, I believe the move to centralized delivery would create a much easier to evaluate method than those presently used.

Change in Workload Evaluation

More Advantages to this Evaluation Method:

1. Create a better relationship between carriers and managers.

Most confrontations on the workroom floor are due to the pressure from managers for the carriers to meet the workload evaluations of their routes from a computer generated report based on data from current route counts. Sometimes the data is erroneous to begin with as the complex nature of the route evaluation can lead to mistakes. Sometimes the data is not even based on that carrier's data.

A standards and criteria adjustment and workload environment would not pay carriers for time, but for the value of the route, so the pressure would be relieved.

2. Create better customer service.

Managers, who now spend much of their time making reports and dealing with assumed carrier inability to live up to the imposed workloads, would have their time freed up to deal more with the customer service issues that sometimes take a back seat to "making the numbers" presently. Carriers, no longer pressured to get through, would be free to deal with customer service issues also.

3. Create a more Efficient Postal Service.

The routes would be more stable under this method, the carriers would be less inclined to slow down, and management would be given the opportunity to deal with the day to day interests of the operation, rather than the individual to individual evaluation daily of letter carrier workloads.

Again, I believe the move to centralized delivery would go hand in hand with the change in workload evaluation methods.

Change in Workload Evaluation

How do we change the Workload Evaluation Methods?

1. The entire system must be overhauled.

Most of the M41 and M39 manuals (City Carrier Duties, and Manager of City Delivery) would have to be completely rewritten. Much of the standards and criteria method of evaluation and adjustment has already been studied, and much can be borrowed from the Canadian Postal Service, who already have a similar method in place.

2. Enlist local managers in the transition.

My own personal experience has proven that local managers in postal units with City Carriers are, to a person, in favor of this type of evaluation. I have spoken to literally hundreds of managers over the past ten years, finding not one who was opposed to it. They are on the front lines, and know what will work, and will be the best advocates for this change.

3. Develop a new relationship with the NALC.

The letter carriers' union will take some convincing, but there are those among us that have seen the problems with the present system who will work for the changes I propose. In general, the more a union rep has worked with the present system and the more knowledgeable that rep is, the more towards this system he/she will lean.

I did propose a joint evaluation and adjustment team to implement this change. I feel it is necessary to include the union as a partner in the transition. Otherwise the fallout from the resistance to change will impede its necessary progress.

Let's face facts here. The union is faced with a decrease in revenue due to a decrease in the carrier work force. My proposals will accelerate that decrease. In order to get the union to "buy into" these changes we will have to involve them deeply. I propose the Postal Service hire union officials as team members for the evaluation, adjustment process. This would lessen the burden on the union's resources and give the Postal Service valuable expertise in the transition process.

This team method has worked well in many places with the present Dispute Resolution Process teams, and I am sure it could work well in this instance.

Report to the President's Commission on the United States Postal Service

A letter Carrier's Perspective of Delivery Methods and Work Load Evaluations

My Conclusion:

I believe the Postal Service can thrive in the modern world by changing the delivery methods and workload evaluation methods of City Letter Carriers. If we can do both things at once, we will be able to reduce the carrier work force by a rough estimate of 25% to 35%. We will develop a delivery method and workload evaluation based mainly on the volume of mail, which will coincide with our profit model.

We will also benefit in a safer delivery environment and better security of the mail in the field.

The ensuing lessening of pressure to "make the numbers" and partnership with the NALC in evaluation and adjustment of routes will create a much better labor climate.